

BRIEFING DOCUMENT: EXPERT MEETING ON COMPREHENSIVE, BALANCED AND COORDINATED SCIENTIFIC STRATEGY TO COUNTER ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING, PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF DRUG ABUSE

Weerasinghe, D.P.P.;

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Expert Meeting on Comprehensive, Balanced and Coordinated Scientific Strategy to Counter Illicit Drug Trafficking, Prevention and Control of Drug Abuse

5th - 6th March 2019, Colombo, Sri Lanka

organized by

National Dangerous Drugs Control Board

under the Research Associate Grant Project of

International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA)

Briefing Note

Background

The National Dangerous Drugs Control Board (NDDCB) as the national focal point for prevention and control of drug abuse in Sri Lanka, is highly concerned about the devastating adverse consequences of the drug problem such as overdose deaths, drug associated health issues, overburdened criminal justice system, crime development and threats to socioeconomic development and security & stability of the country.

Committing to the goals and the objectives of the international drug control treaties and other recommendations made by the resolutions of Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the NDDCB has recognized that the drug problem should be addressed in a multilateral setting through effective and increased national and international cooperation and coordination.

The NDDCB has recognized the importance of establishing mechanisms with integrated, multidisciplinary, mutually reinforcing, balanced, coordinated, scientific evidence-based strategies with shared responsibility. Therefore, with the determination of tackling the drug problem to protect the right of the people to lead a healthy and peaceful way of life and to promote sustainable socio-economic development with greater security and stability, we have identified the importance of scientific strategies for the establishment of an effective and efficient national drug control policy in the country.

International Expert Meeting on Comprehensive, Balanced and Coordinated Scientific Strategy to Counter Illicit Drug Trafficking, Prevention and Control of Drug Abuse

On consideration of the emerging threats, the impact of drug trafficking and abuse and their adverse consequences, scientific evidence is inevitable in formulation of comprehensive, balanced, coordinated National Policy. Sri Lanka National Policy for Prevention and Control of Drug Abuse is formulated and reviewed by the National Dangerous Drugs Control Board (NDDCB) in terms of the powers vested by its establishment Act. Information and scientific data generated by the National Narcotics Laboratory (NNL) and the Research Unit of NDDCB are currently being utilized for policy making related to drug prevention and control in Sri Lanka.

However, limited inter- and intra-agency coordination and collaboration is a major drawback to improve the scientific evidences generation process and adequate scientific advice on the national drug policy.

Therefore, NDDCB has organized an International Expert Meeting on Comprehensive, Balanced and Coordinated Scientific Strategy to Counter Illicit Drug Trafficking, Prevention and Control of Drug Abuse under the Research Associate Grant of **International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA)**. The expert meeting will be held on **5th - 6th March 2019** in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Objectives of the Meeting

- i. To understand the context of scientific evidence/information, and impart scientific knowledge for effective drug prevention, control measures and for drug policy making in Sri Lanka and thereby to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.
- ii. To identify the challenges/obstacles to access to the scientific evidence and scientific advice to drug prevention and control and for drug policy making.

- iii. To reaffirm the roles and responsibilities of scientific professionals and other agencies involved in drug prevention and control for the development of National policy on prevention and control of drug abuse.
- iv. To call upon all related agencies for the establishment of a mechanism for continuous improvement of inter- and intra- agency coordination and collaboration for maximum utilization of scientific evidence for strengthened drug policy making.

Participants

We look forward to bring together expert professionals from criminal justice system, drug law enforcement agencies, treatment and rehabilitation authorities and health authorities, scientific professionals from the National Dangerous Drugs Control Board, Government Analyst's Department, Sri Lanka Anti-Doping Agency, Science and Technology Institutions the Universities and other professionals from Government and Non-Governmental agencies and to discuss impact of drug problem, challenges and scientific recommendations and advice for the establishment of scientific evidence based National Drug Policy.

Discussion Topics and activities

a. Scientific evidence and technical cooperation to overcome challenges on drug law enforcement, criminal justice system, drug prevention, treatment and rehabilitation system

The expert meeting will discuss on addressing drug law enforcement challenges through scientific evidence and technical support, role of scientific professionals in countering illicit drug trafficking and abuse, impact of emerging drug trafficking and abuse problem on the Criminal Justice System and strategies to overcome challenges, implementation of measures for drug demand reduction, application of scientific evidence based methodologies for drug prevention, treatment and rehabilitation.

b. The Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) platform

The Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) platform is all-important for capacity building and mobilize partnerships for the development of inter- and intra-agency coordination and cooperation for drug prevention and activities. The expert meeting will discuss on the significance of the establishment of the STI platform to develop and improve inter- and intra- agency coordination and collaboration between scientific professionals, law enforcement professionals and other agencies for strengthened drug policy making and thereby to achieve successfully achieve the sustainable development goals relevant to drug prevention and control by 2030.

c. Importance of a National Laboratory Network on Analysis and Testing of Dangerous Drugs (NLNATDD) Establishment

The expert meeting will discuss the importance of a *National Laboratory Network on Analysis and Testing of Dangerous Drugs (NLNATDD)* for quality laboratory analysis and generate scientific evidence in an effective, efficient and timely manner considering its significant implications for the criminal justice system, drug law enforcement, drug prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and health authorities and policymakers and as well as for the international harmonization and worldwide exchange and coordination of drug information and data.

d. Review of the Guideline on Development of a Scientific Evidence Based National Drug Policy

Draft Guidelines on Development of a Scientific Evidence based National Drug Policy will be reviewed so that it will reach wide range of stakeholders and all other agencies involved in drug prevention and control for maximum utilization of the scientific knowledge for effective drug control measures and national policy making.

The National Narcotics Laboratory (NNL)
National Dangerous Drugs Control Board (NDDCB)
383, Kotte Road
Rajagiriya, 10107
Sri Lanka.

Tele : +94 112868794-6 / Fax : +94 112868791-2 Email: nnl@nddcb.gov.lk